The Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers (Mass League) and Suffolk University are pleased to announce an exciting opportunity for up to three (3) employees of participating community health centers who are interested and meet the criteria for admission to the Mass League of Community Health Centers’ Certificate Program in Community Health and Community Health Management. The Mass League has partnered with Suffolk University to offer this certificate program to provide employees of health centers the opportunity to access a high quality and affordable graduate-level education, while at the same time, to advance the skills and careers of community health center middle managers. Our eight-month, health center-focused curriculum includes modules in health policy, human resources, leadership, grant writing, finance and marketing. Participants attending these sessions may earn up to 12 credit waivers toward future graduate studies at Suffolk University’s MPA Program.

This 2022-2023 session marks our 21st year offering this distinctive certificate program which cultivates and supports opportunities for public and nonprofit sector employees to share ideas and promote community engagement while enhancing communication, networking and problem solving between and among health centers. In 2019, Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) identified the League's Suffolk program as one of the "most effective" workforce training the League conducts.

Candidates must have a strong desire to further develop their skills and knowledge of community health and a commitment to grow within your organizational structure. The support of the student’s CHC is required for participation.

**Information for Student Applicants**

**What are the criteria for the certificate program?**

The program is uniquely focused on advancing the skills and careers of middle managers. This means that you are currently a middle manager or have been positioning yourself to be a middle manager at your CHC. Candidates must have a strong desire to further develop their skills and knowledge of community health and a commitment to grow within your organizational structure. Applicants must be:
- Able to meet the time commitment to this 8-month program that involves one day a week of coursework.
- A full-time employee in good standing with a consistently strong work ethic.
- Have a supervisor’s written recommendation (required).
- Able to maintain full time employment throughout the program and fulfill all responsibilities of your position without adverse operational impact on your department or role within the organization.

**Do I attend classes in-person or online?**
All classes will be held online via Zoom, with the exception of the first day of each block (9/16/2022, 1/6/2023, 2/24/2023, and 4/14/2023) which will be held in person. The location will be Suffolk University, 120 Tremont Street, 5th Floor (the Law School). The times will be 9:00am-4:00pm (with breaks in between).

**Will there be reading material?**
Yes, you can expect a materials fee of about $250.00. Students will be responsible for the cost and ordering of books. We try to minimize the cost of books for students in this program to make it more accessible and affordable. While we cannot guarantee the final amount students will need to spend because the cost of books fluctuates each year, this year you can expect a total cost of books somewhere around $250. Suffolk University staff will work to find affordable options of the literature, and students are also provided library access to Suffolk University. We encourage students to connect with the library for book assistance if needed. A list of required materials will be sent after being accepted into the program.

**What is the actual commitment to the program and CHC?**
Successful completion of the program includes your attendance and full engagement for the entire eight (8) months. The program is held from September 2022 through May 2023 with a graduation in May or June 2023. Students may be eligible to earn up to 12 credits toward the MPA graduate program.

- **Completion Requirement:** Students must successfully complete (receive a passing grade) at least 80% (eight of ten modules/ten of twelve modules) of the offered courses.
- **Passing grade:** A passing grade is completion of a course’s specifically outlined requirements at a “C” or higher level.
- **Graduate Credit Waivers:** For courses which have a Suffolk University public management graduate course equivalent, graduate course waivers may be available at Suffolk University for students who complete the specifically outlined graduate level course requirements at a minimum “B” or 85% level. In addition to receiving a “B” in any individual course, a student must successfully complete the full requirements and graduate from the certificate program (i.e. pass eight of ten modules/four of five blocks). Suffolk may also grant course requirement waivers in order to substitute an elective course.

You are required to attend all class sessions and must receive a grade of “C” or higher to graduate. In addition, you are required to sign and submit a commitment of participation agreement with your CHC after notification of acceptance.

**Will I need to use my PTO for the weekly session?**
No, you would not need to use your PTO to attend the courses, but it is your responsibility to discuss any accommodations with your supervisor. You will want to assure that your participation in this program does not adversely impact your colleagues, department, or organization. You must also be sure that all your job responsibilities are performed within the required timeframes.
**Do I receive any credits?**
Participants attending the program may earn up to 12 credit waivers toward future graduate studies in Suffolk University’s MPA (Master’s in Public Administration) Program, dependent on successful completion of syllabus requirements with a grade of “B” or higher. Tuition value at Suffolk of $15,200.

**Do I need to have a college degree to apply?**
This is not mandatory, but preferred.

**Do I need to want to pursue a graduate degree to apply?**
This is not mandatory, but preferred.

**How do I apply or get more information about the program (including the class schedule and names of the courses)?**
You can access the application and additional information by clicking the link below: https://www.massleague.org/SuffolkCertificateProgram/index.php

**What is the process after I submit the application and supervisor form?**
The Mass League leadership team will review your application and make final admission decisions by September 7th. You will be notified via email regarding your application status. Completed applications as well as the attached Supervisor’s Recommendation/Agency Commitment Form must be submitted by the deadline of August 31st by 5:00pm via email. Please email the completed application to mlchcsuffolkprogram@massleague.org

**Information for Community Health Center Supervisors**
Thank you for your interest in supporting your staff in their professional growth and development. In order for your staff to participate, they need your support. This includes:

- Discuss this opportunity with your staff member(s) to establish interest and determine how this program fits into their and your organization goals.
- Sponsoring agencies agree to pay a $50 nonrefundable agency application fee (a onetime fee, regardless of the number of applicants). This fee will be submitted along with the student’s application.
- Sponsoring agencies agree to pay the tuition fee for members of $3,950 or non-members of $5,200. The tuition fee is nonrefundable after the student attends the 2nd session of class. Health centers sending two or more staff will receive complimentary tuition for a third staff member.
- Complete the Supervisor’s Recommendation/Agency Commitment Form as part of your staff member’s application – this will be due by August 31st.
- Discuss and approve your staff participant’s excusal from work to attend class on Fridays. Ensure that your staff will not need to use PTO to attend coursework, and discuss any accommodations with your staff. You will both want to assure that participation in this program does not adversely impact colleagues, departments, or your organization, and that all job responsibilities are performed within the required timeframes.
• Support your staff throughout the program: share their success with your CHC and team, and check in on their learning and how it can be applied to their work with you. Identify key staff to invite to the graduation ceremony and celebration.

• Participants in the program must successfully complete at least 80% of the offered courses and meet syllabus requirements to be eligible to graduate, and CHCs agree to give enrolled employees paid time off in order to attend classes and participate in an evaluation of the certificate program, and to adjust their work requirements accordingly. Participants attending the program may earn up to 12 credit waivers toward future graduate studies in Suffolk University’s MPA (Master’s in Public Administration) Program, dependent on successful completion of syllabus requirements with a grade of “B” or higher (See details below). Tuition value at Suffolk of $15,200. All Certificate Program enrollees will commit themselves to continued employment with their sponsoring agency for at least one year following their graduation.

• Successful completion of the program includes student attendance and full engagement for the entire eight (8) months. The program is held from September 2022 through May 2023 with a graduation in May or June 2023. Students may be eligible to earn up to 12 credits toward the MPA graduate program.
  
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• Applications are due on August 31, 2022 or earlier, as applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and space is limited.

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**Additional Certificate Program Information**

In its ongoing efforts to address workforce issues in community health, the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, in partnership with Suffolk University, has developed a certificate program to advance the skills and careers of community health center middle managers. The Certificate Program in Community Health and Community Health Center Management is the result of hours of League consultation with health center executive directors, administrators, clinicians and board members on the challenges health centers face in retaining and promoting staff, particularly middle managers. In response, the League collaborated with Suffolk University to create a certificate program specifically tailored to the unique needs of health center professionals who desire to increase their skill level and advance within their health center organization.
Although training programs do exist in public and human service management, the League has identified serious barriers for mid-career staff in need of certain skills that will take them to the next level of management responsibility: (1) lack of financial resources to pay for education; (2) inadequate release-time from work responsibilities; and (3) a perception that existing programs are not tailored to the specific skill sets required by community health agencies.

Addressing these barriers through a program that is uniquely structured for health center middle level managers, the program seeks to: (1) increase the number of qualified health center mid-managers; (2) provide career growth opportunities for middle managers; and (3) introduce mid-managers to others in similar positions as mentors who will provide counseling and support.

Program Sponsors

• The League & Suffolk University Certificate Program is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling $1,666,805 with 71.5 percentage of costs financed with non-governmental sources. All program content reflects the views of participating faculty and does not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.

• The League & Suffolk University Certificate Program is supported by funds from the University of Massachusetts Medical School/Commonwealth Medicine (CWM), MassAHEC and MassHealth.